

## **DEPARTMENT OF EARTH SCIENCES**

### Tenure and Promotion Criteria

Approved by the Tenured Faculty of the Department of Earth Sciences: 8 October, 2014

#### **I. OVERVIEW**

Tenure and promotion (hereafter T&P) are two of the most important concerns for faculty who join the Department of Earth Sciences at The University of Memphis (hereafter U of M). Thus the following guide is developed to assist individuals, committees, and administrators involved in matters of T&P in Earth Sciences. In particular, it is intended to assist each candidate to qualify for Tenure, for promotion to Associate Professor, and for promotion to Professor. The candidate must be familiar with these requirements and must meet Tennessee Board of Regents, department, college, and university eligibility criteria at the time of application. Such criteria, guidelines, and requirements may change over time through Earth Sciences, College, or University review, and the candidate has the responsibility to be aware of official changes.

T&P criteria set forth in this document apply to all faculty with Earth Sciences as their home department. This document reflects both the combined views of this collective faculty regarding T&P criteria and the review of these criteria by the College of Arts and Sciences. To ensure that expectations are met, all candidates should consult with the Earth Sciences chair. The Earth Sciences chair will provide current departmental guidelines to potential T&P candidates upon initial employment and as modifications are made.

The achievement of both tenure and promotion requires meeting the same general criteria for promotion to Associate Professor, and candidates will be held to the guidelines existing at the beginning of the spring semester before they apply. Faculty should be familiar with the Mission of Earth Sciences. Teaching, research, service, and all other professional activities that forward the mission of Earth Sciences enhance each candidate's potential for T&P. Although Earth Sciences has work expectations for faculty that reflect the broad nature of the Earth Sciences, T&P guidelines specifically relate to achieving excellence, for which all faculty should strive, in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

Criteria for T&P are available in the Faculty handbook, the department office, and on the web.

Earth Sciences criteria (this document) can be found at:

[http://www.memphis.edu/facres/docs/Earth\\_Sciencest\\_p2012.doc](http://www.memphis.edu/facres/docs/Earth_Sciencest_p2012.doc)

College of Arts and Sciences criteria can be found at:

<http://www.memphis.edu/facres/tandpguide.php#arts>

University criteria can be found at:

[http://www.memphis.edu/facres/faculty\\_handbook.php](http://www.memphis.edu/facres/faculty_handbook.php)

#### **TYPES OF FACULTY APPOINTMENTS**

Tenure-track appointments are made to the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor. Other types of Earth Sciences faculty appointments that do not involve tenure or promotion include Research faculty, Instructor, Visiting Professor, Post-doctoral Research position, Adjunct, and Emeritus faculty.

#### **II. EVALUATIONS**

##### **A. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Copies of all annual performance evaluations will be provided to the faculty member, as well as be recorded in the faculty member's file. Annual performance evaluation is an integral part of the T&P process. Annual performance evaluations for faculty will follow currently existing performance-review procedures established by the Dean and Provost.

##### **B. MID-TERM TENURE REVIEW.**

A mid-term evaluation during the Spring Semester of the third academic year for each tenure-track faculty member will be made by the Earth Sciences T&P committee. The dossier for mid-tenure review must be similar to the dossier required for application for T&P, except no external letters of support are required. The contents of the T&P dossier are described in the College of Arts and Sciences web site listed above. Exceptions to the third year rule may include faculty with substantial prior experience at other universities or previously on non-tenure track at

The U of M. Such exceptions must be fully documented and authorized by the signatures of appropriate administrators. The T&P committee summary should clearly state any perceived shortcomings and recommend corrective efforts to be made prior to the formal T&P application. The committee's mid-tenure review will be sent to the Earth Sciences chair.

The Earth Sciences chair will write a separate mid-term evaluation of the faculty member. The evaluation will identify the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses and recommend strategies for improvement. Comments and recommendations of both the T&P committee and the Earth Sciences Chair will be provided to the faculty member and placed in the faculty member's file.

The mid-term review reports are an integral part of the T&P process and should be included in the dossier when the candidate applies for T&P. If it does not appear that the faculty member under consideration is progressing to satisfy the criteria for tenure, this must be expressed to the candidate both at mid-term review and at annual performance evaluations and so noted in writing with a description of what increased expectations he/she must achieve for serious consideration for T&P to Associate Professor.

### III. FACULTY GUIDELINES FOR T&P TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

All faculty are expected to establish a vigorous research program, teach and mentor undergraduate and graduate students, and provide service. Faculty are expected to maintain good departmental citizenship through professionalism in their interaction with other faculty and students, a willingness to assist fellow faculty, and to treat all persons with courtesy, respect, and dignity. Expectations for individual faculty will vary based upon their expected annual teaching, research and service activities as stated in their faculty appointment letter and yearly assignments. The chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee and the Earth Sciences chair will discuss these expectations with new faculty members early in their first semester. After that discussion, the chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee, in conjunction with other faculty forming a mentoring committee, will be responsible for assisting new faculty members in developing an appropriate plan to meet Earth Sciences expectations to achieve T&P.

A Ph.D. degree (or equivalent) from an accredited university in a discipline relevant to Earth Sciences is required for tenure and for all levels of promotion. Full Graduate Faculty status is also required prior to submission of the dossier for T&P consideration to Associate Professor. Earth Sciences faculty who also are members of Centers or Institutes (such as CERI, Ground Water Institute, Confucius Institute, or Hooks Institute) should show a joint affiliation.

Specific criteria cited in this document reflect the type of activities Earth Sciences encourages for new faculty to become tenured colleagues. For both T&P, the candidate's activities in the areas of teaching, research, and service will be specifically evaluated. Included in these general topics are student advising and mentoring, external support for research and scholarship, and outreach.

The criteria for excellence are intended to set standards toward which all faculty members should consistently aspire. All of these excellence criteria do not have to be met for T&P, but are intended as guidelines in Earth Sciences for excellence in different categories. Clearly, no individual is likely to excel in all areas, but progress and potential are expected in each category. Furthermore, candidates satisfying fewer areas will be expected to show higher achievements within those areas.

#### A. CRITERIA FOR EXCELLENCE

The following are examples for excellence in each of the following areas. More importance is placed on the examples in *italics*.

##### *Teaching*

An excellent teacher is one who:

1. *is an effective teacher as measured by the S.I.R.S./SETE evaluations/reports; evidence of quality teaching may also include letters of commendation from alumni; teaching awards presented by the university; and letters certifying quality teaching from fellow faculty.*
2. develops new courses or new classroom methodologies.
3. integrates field experiences, special projects, new technology, techniques, and ideas into courses.
4. obtains external/internal funds to improve teaching/learning or to develop new courses.

### *Advising/Mentoring*

An excellent advisor is one who:

1. *advises students through completion of their degrees in a timely manner; provides resources/assistance for completion of degrees.*
2. *engages students in innovative research that leads to publishable results coauthored by students.*
3. *creates a positive mentoring relationship with students that is helpful and collegial; that encourages original thought; and that helps them achieve their career objectives.*
4. *serves on thesis and dissertation committees both at U of M and other institutions.*

### *Scholarship*

An excellent scholar is one who, on an annual basis, achieves such accomplishments as:

1. *publishes significant papers in nationally and internationally recognized refereed journals and books that establish the author as a recognized leader, expert, or innovator in the profession. Some publications should be first authored. To mentor and encourage students to publish their research with faculty members, Earth Sciences recognizes the important contributions that faculty make as second author when a student is first author.*
2. *maintains an externally funded research program with high national and international visibility that attracts and supports graduate students, visiting scientists, or post-doctoral scholars.*
3. *may contribute through engaged scholarship\* in various communities that establish the scholar as a recognized leader, expert, or innovator in the profession. The individual's mentoring committee and the Earth Sciences chair should help each scholar determine their level of effort for engaged scholarship and that level may vary from year to year or by projects.*
4. *receives invitations to speak at national/international meetings and special conferences.*
5. *receives invitations to speak at departmental colloquia across the nation.*
6. *presents or contributes to multiple abstracts at national/international meetings.*
7. *has sustained participation in scholarly activities/field trips as a recognized leader or expert that leads to publications or funded proposals.*

\*Engaged scholarship: The University of Memphis is a metropolitan research institution that seeks to serve its urban, regional, state, national, and global communities in a number of ways. Vital to this mission is scholarship that addresses the concerns and opportunities of these communities. Such scholarship (1) involves academic projects that engage faculty members and students in a collaborative and sustained manner with community groups; (2) connects university outreach with community organizational goals; (3) furthers mutual productive relationships between the university and the community; (4) entails shared authority in the research process from defining the research problem, choosing theoretical and methodological approaches, conducting the results, developing the final product(s), to participating in peer review; and (5) results in excellence in engaged scholarship through such products as peer-reviewed publications, peer-reviewed collaborative reports, documentation of impact, and external funding.

Engaged Scholarship should further awareness in partnerships between faculty members and students of the University of Memphis and community organizations and agencies in the Memphis/Mid-South region, the State of Tennessee, the United States, and global communities.

Annual reviews should make note of engaged scholarship efforts and awards.

### *Service*

A faculty member providing excellent service is one who:

1. *serves as Earth Sciences Graduate Coordinator or as the undergraduate Coordinator.*
2. *serves on national or international government or professional scientific committees; or national review panels or boards, particularly as chair.*
3. *serves as an editor or associate editor for professional scientific journals or as a volume editor for books.*
4. *serves as a U of M administrator or Faculty Senate officer.*

5. reviews proposals for funding agencies; reviews manuscripts for professional scientific journals; reviews books for publishers.
6. serves as an officer in one or more professional societies; organizes conferences, workshops, field trips, and short courses for professional societies.
7. under special circumstances that do not impede faculty duties, does unique consulting work that contributes significantly to professional recognition.

#### *Outreach*

A faculty member providing excellent outreach is one who:

1. *particularly develops programs that attract undergraduate majors in Earth Sciences from high schools.*
2. *actively recruits students for the graduate program.*
3. presents talks at regional universities, colleges, high schools, and community organizations.
4. involves undergraduates at local colleges and universities in research projects.
5. shares professional expertise with the wider community and state.
6. provides Earth Sciences distance learning through video assisted courses or on-line courses.
7. serves as advisor to student groups and other sanctioned organizations at U of M.

#### **B. EXCEPTION CRITERIA RELATED TO T&P TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**

Normally, the applicant *must* apply for T&P to Associate Professor at the start of his/her 6<sup>th</sup> year at U of M, (i.e., after five years of experience at the Assistant Professor level) and one set of criteria covers both events.

Exceptions for either earlier T&P consideration or a delay in T&P consideration must be fully documented, explained, and explicitly authorized by signatures of appropriate administrators. Judgment to apply for either earlier or later T&P consideration will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Once the application for T&P is initiated, the candidate *cannot withdraw or modify* the application. The seventh year is the terminal year if T&P is denied in the sixth year or if no exception to delay T&P consideration has been authorized. If an early tenure application is denied, then the following academic year is the terminal year.

#### **IV. CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR**

The rank of Professor is not a reward for long service, but instead is recognition of excellent performance, with every expectation of continuing superior contributions to the department, college, university, and profession. Applicants for promotion to Professor or new faculty members appointed at this rank must satisfy and maintain the criteria outlined earlier under T&P to Associate Professor. Scholarship (publications; externally funded projects, and community-engagement) is the primary point of distinction between the ranks of Associate Professor and Professor. Excellence in teaching and service are expected to be maintained by faculty members seeking promotion. Although continuing good performance is required, a significantly higher level in quantity and quality of research is expected for promotion to Professor than that expected for promotion to Associate Professor. A significantly higher level of externally funded grants /contracts is expected as well as some combination of publications and engaged scholarship. Among the research publications done beyond those required for T&P to Associate Professor should be those that have established a solid international reputation. The applicant must be a tenured Associate Professor with Full Graduate Faculty status and have completed at least ten years of appropriate professional employment as defined in the Faculty Handbook. Exceptions to this time-in-service requirement must be justified in writing with the signature of administrators authorized to make such modifications. Special recognition of service through awards or memberships to select societies may be included.

Earth Sciences faculty who also are members of Centers or Institutes (such as CERI, Ground Water Institute, Confucius Institute, or Hooks Institute) should show a joint affiliation.

#### **V. APPLICATION PROCESS**

Candidates must inform the Earth Sciences chair of his/her intent to make application for tenure and/or promotion and obtain permissions where exceptions are requested. Note that application for T&P to Associate Professor is a one-time-only process and *must* take place no later than the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Earlier

application for T&P to Associate Professor may take place if so specified in the initial contract or if petition is made to the Earth Sciences chair and approved by appropriate administrative officials. However, once the process is underway with submission of the dossier to the chair of the T&P committee, the application and dossier can be neither amended nor withdrawn. Thus new faculty are encouraged to fully discuss possible ramifications of an early tenure application with the Earth Sciences chair and the Earth Sciences T&P committee before actually submitting an application and dossier for early T&P consideration.

Application for promotion to Professor may be made as early as the Spring Semester prior to the Fall Semester of a candidate's tenth year of appropriate professional employment as defined in the Faculty Handbook. Later and repeated application for promotion to Professor may take place. Once the process is underway in a given year with submission of the dossier to the chair of the T&P committee, the dossier cannot be amended that year. However, the application may be withdrawn.

#### A. EXTERNAL LETTERS

Application for T&P to Associate Professor and for promotion to Professor must be supported by a minimum of four external letters of reference. External reviewers will be selected from a list of names submitted by: 1) the candidate; 2) the tenured members of Earth Sciences; and 3) the Earth Sciences chair. Normally, a third of the names come from each of these lists and potential reviewers should have some expertise that qualifies them to consider the scholarly record of the applicant. If Engaged scholarship is a significant part of the applicant record, then lists should include persons with expertise. The final selection of names will be made by the chair of the T&P committee after consultation with the Earth Sciences chair. No more than one of the reviewers may have been a major advisor of or a collaborator with the candidate. The Earth Sciences T&P committee chair, in his/her report, should provide the rationale for the choice of external reviewers and summarize their credentials. Vitae of reviewers are not to be included with the application. Exceptions must be documented. Letters are not required for annual and mid-term reviews.

#### B. THE DOSSIER

A detailed description of the dossier, which must document teaching, research, and service, required for application for T&P to Associate Professor and for promotion to Full Professor can be found in the Faculty handbook and on the web at: <http://www.memphis.edu/facres/tandp.php>. Note that such an extensive documentation is not required for annual and mid-term reviews. The mid-term review materials should follow the dossier format, except for external review letters.

#### C. SCHEDULE

A schedule of events related to Earth Sciences T&P applications is on the last page of this document. Candidates must enquire at the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for the current timetable for the College T&P process. In the event of conflicts regarding specific submission of material to the College (Steps 8-12), the College schedule supersedes the departmental schedule. However, for Steps 1-7 for the schedule the earlier dates for submission of review material are needed to ensure timely reviews because many researchers are in the field during the summer months.

### VII. MODIFICATION OF EARTH SCIENCES T&P GUIDELINES

These guidelines may be modified on an annual basis at the end of the Spring semester through faculty discussion to suit changing goals and organization in the department, college, and university. Discussion of T&P guidelines may include faculty who have not yet achieved tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Modifications to the guidelines, however, can only be approved by a vote of the tenured Earth Sciences faculty. The Earth Sciences chair, if tenured, can participate as a voting member for making changes to the T&P guidelines. A two-thirds vote of the tenured faculty present at the annual meeting of the T&P committee during the Spring Semester shall constitute their approval of modifications. The chair of the T&P committee will be responsible for writing approved modifications, circulating a draft to all tenured and tenure-track faculty in Earth Sciences and forwarding the final draft to the Earth Sciences chair for submission to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for approval.

## VIII. COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE EARTH SCIENCES T&P COMMITTEE

For T&P to Associate Professor, the Earth Sciences T&P committee will consist of all tenured Associate

Professors and Professors in Earth Sciences. For promotion to Professor, the Promotion Committee will consist of all tenured Professors in Earth Sciences. Non-tenured faculty, tenured spouses of candidates, and the Earth Sciences chair will not participate in the vote of the committee.

The chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee will be selected by a secret vote of the tenured faculty at the end of the Spring Semester. The names of candidates for this position will be given the chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee prior to the spring meeting. The chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee will serve for a two-year period and may not be reelected to a consecutive term. Please note that the chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee has responsibilities during the summer that must be met (see schedule) if a candidate intends to submit an application for tenure or promotion in the fall. A quorum will be two thirds of the Earth Sciences T&P committee members for the appropriate type of consideration and it is the responsibility of the chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee to see that a quorum committee meeting is held at the earliest possible date in the Fall semester of each year for consideration of applications filed that year and to see that a quorum committee meeting is held in the Spring semester of each year to consider possible modifications to the Earth Sciences T&P guidelines. Effort must be made to ensure that balanced representation across Earth Sciences sub-disciplines of Geography, Geology, and Archaeology will be on the quorum committee at the time that votes are taken. In the event that a committee of suitable composition (with at least one member representing each discipline) and size cannot be constituted, the Earth Sciences chair will take remedial action and include an explanation in the candidate's dossier.

Committee members must be present to vote on tenure or promotion; no absentee votes are accepted. Absentee faculty, who are eligible to vote on the T&P committee, may submit written evaluations of candidates that must be read by the T&P committee during committee deliberations prior to voting. Vote is by secret ballot immediately after deliberations are concluded. The summary vote will be read to committee members who are present. The committee chair should retain the vote ballots until the final decision on the application is rendered, usually late in the Spring Semester. Earth Sciences committee members who are on the college T&P committee or university appeals committee should vote at the departmental level, because they will be excused at the college and appeals levels.

The chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee will write a letter to the Earth Sciences chair expressing the committee recommendation, summarizing committee deliberations and votes, identifying committee members who voted, identifying committee members who were absent, and identifying absentee committee members who submitted written evaluations of the candidate for consideration by the Earth Sciences T&P committee. If the vote was not unanimous and more than one minority vote was cast, the letter to the Earth Sciences chair will contain a statement summarizing discussion that could have led to the minority vote. If no reasons for the minority vote were voiced during discussion, then this should be stated in the committee's letter. Committee members will have an opportunity to review the letter and may offer suggestions for improvement, however only one letter goes forward from the committee to the Earth Sciences chair. Committee members must maintain confidentiality.

The Earth Sciences chair will make a recommendation that is independent of the departmental committee. The Earth Sciences chair will promptly forward the Earth Sciences T&P committee's recommendation and his/her own recommendation to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Earth Sciences chair will then notify the candidate of his/her progress to date.

When the Earth Sciences chair is considered for tenure and/or promotion, the chair of the Earth Sciences T&P committee will forward that committee's recommendation directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

## Schedule for Earth Sciences T&amp;P Actions:

	Responsibility	Action	Due Date
1	Candidates	Notify Earth Sciences chair of intent to apply for T&P in the following Fall semester.	April 15
2	Candidates, Chair of Earth Sciences T&P Committee, chair	Develop list of potential external reviewers for each applicant.	May 1
3	Faculty	Convene Earth Sciences T&P committee; designate committee chair for coming year.	May 1
4	Chair of Earth Sciences T&P committee	Contact external reviewers until four agree to participate for each applicant.	May 15
5	Earth Sciences chair	Authorizes application and supplies a written rationale for exceptions to normal procedures. Provides chair of Earth Sciences T&P committee with list of potential evaluators	June 1
6	Candidates	Develop vita and support materials to be sent to external reviewers.	June 1
7	Chair of Earth Sciences T&P committee	Send letter, candidate-supplied materials, and Earth Sciences T&P guidelines to external reviewers.	June 15
8	Candidate	Complete dossier and submit to Earth Sciences chair.	Aug. 20
9	Earth Sciences chair	Submit candidate dossiers, external review letters, and letters authorizing applications for T&P or promotion to chair of Earth Sciences T&P committee.	Sept. 1
10	Chair of Earth Sciences T&P committee	Schedule review of applications, schedule committee meeting(s), write committee recommendation-letters, forward relevant materials for each candidate to Earth Sciences chair.	Sept. 15
11	Earth Sciences chair	Review candidate applications and recommendations of T&P committee; write Earth Sciences chair recommendation-letters. Write cover letters summarizing Earth Sciences recommendations and any additional information that might be needed regarding Earth Sciences T&P committee membership or actions, and/or the rationale for selection of external reviewers.	Oct. 1
12	Earth Sciences chair	Send candidate dossiers and all relevant material to the Dean of Arts and Sciences.	Oct. 10